



**PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 14, 2018 6:00 P.M.
MUNICIPAL BUILDING II, CONFERENCE ROOM 100
90 E. CIVIC CENTER DRIVE, GILBERT, ARIZONA 85296**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Robert Ferron, Vice Chair
Barbara Guy
Gilbert Honeycutt
Jennifer Jones
Mark LaPorte
Edward Madrid
Matthew Roberts

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Les Presmyk, Chair
Christopher Wharton

GUESTS PRESENT:

Boy Scouts from Troop 683

STAFF PRESENT:

Robert Carmona, Interim Parks and Recreation Director
John Kennedy, Parks and Recreation Manager
Rocky Brown, Parks and Recreation Business Manager
Denise Merdon, Special Events, Marketing & Sponsorships
Linda Ayres, Administrative Support Supervisor
Dave Fabiano, Town Engineer
Jennifer Lauria, Program Coordinator
Jennie Rambo, Naturalist, Riparian Preserve

COUNCIL LIAISON PRESENT:

Eddie Cook, Councilmember

STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

- 1. CALL TO ORDER:** Vice Chair Ferron called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- 2. ROLL CALL:** Linda Ayres called the roll and declared that a quorum was present.
- 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 4. COMMUNICATION FROM CITIZENS PRESENT:** Members of the public may comment on matters within the jurisdiction of the Parks and Recreation Board, but not on the agenda. The Board's response is limited to responding to criticism, asking staff to review a matter commented upon, or asking that a matter be put on a future agenda. There were no communications from citizens.

PRESENTATIONS

- 5. STAFF INTRODUCTIONS / ROLES:** Robert Carmona noted that this item is on the agenda in case some of the new Board members have not met all of the staff members. As there are often presentations by different departments, we will keep this item on the agenda.
- 6. SOUTHEAST REGIONAL LIBRARY PARKING LOT:** Dave Fabiano, Town Engineer, reported that staff had been tasked to look at options for the water feature at the Southeast Regional Library (SERL). This presentation was made to Council a few months ago. Rather than spend the resources to repair the water feature, Council wanted to explore other options. SERL is the busiest library in Maricopa County with 731,525 visitors in FY17, not including visitors to the Riparian Preserve, which is over 200,000. There has been feedback from customers regarding the shortage of parking and lack of connection between both parking lots. During special events, people need to park across the street and walk across Guadalupe Road. There are other challenges to consider, such as flooding in the parking lot. Back in 2011, there was a research project by the ASU School of Environmental Design to repurpose the water feature. A number of concepts were developed and one was

recommended to Council. The intent is to use as much of that concept as possible while also addressing the challenges with drainage, parking and circulation. It was deemed best to close two of the entrances near the corner, as they are too close to the intersection by today's standards. That will allow for a connection between the two lots as well as up to 60 additional parking spaces. The bus turnout needs to stay and there needs to be an ADA accessible route from the road to the library. The driveways will also need deceleration lanes in order to not back up traffic, which will require moving utilities and street lights. The existing pavement was installed in 1990 and needs to be redone. Councilmember Anderson led a task force with staff to look at options and challenges for the SERL parking lot. Staff has addressed all of those issues and brought this new plan forward to Council to be considered as a CIP project for the next fiscal year. The infrastructure will be close to \$3 million.

Board questions:

Mark LaPorte asked how the drainage issue has been addressed in the plan? The existing retention basins are not adequately sized and the dry wells have failed and are clogging. New dry wells will be constructed and the basins will be enlarged to accommodate drainage.

How often is drainage an issue? As a civil engineer for 25 years in Arizona, Mr. Fabiano stated drainage is an issue in every project, and when it rains, flooding issues can be catastrophic.

A member of the audience felt it would be a tragedy to lose the open space and water feature on that corner. There are several hundred parking spaces to the north and east as well as the church to the south. Is there an option to work with those businesses for shared parking during events? Mr. Fabiano felt that was a good question and one that was not explored as a committee. There could be agreements with those private properties.

Mr. Fabiano noted that a major complaint from residents with the current layout is that vehicles need to enter and exit on the same side, either Greenfield or Guadalupe, because the parking areas are not connected. The open space is valuable, although from an operational perspective, there have been safety and liability issues with kids and the proximity to the street. This plan is a blending of two ideas to have an inviting open space while providing connectivity and needed parking. Staff felt this was the best compromise to achieve both goals.

John Kennedy noted that for larger special events on evenings and weekends, we do work with local businesses to utilize their parking. During the week, that is not an option.

Mr. Fabiano advised that there are issues with parking at the library on regular weekdays as it fills up. We see a lot of people parking to the north and jaywalking across Guadalupe with kids.

Denise Merdon noted that the church contacted the town asking to use our parking on Sunday mornings. For much of the year, there are many people visiting the Riparian Preserve, which shares parking with the Library.

Staff will look for resources to do this project as soon as possible as there is no money available at this time. The Council needs to balance this with the other Town needs. The preference was to not spend money fixing something when there may be a better answer. This project will be placed on the CIP for the next fiscal year.

AGENDA ITEMS

7. TORTOISE HABITAT: The Scouts with Troop 683 presented their concept for a Tortoise Habitat in an enclosure with benches and landscaping at the Southeast Regional Library. A very visible location was chosen to keep the tortoises as safe as possible, and signs will be posted advising people that the enclosure is monitored. The Scouts will explore the possibility of using the library's video surveillance system, installing a camera facing the habitat. The Tortoise Habitat would provide a family-friendly educational exhibit, a space for programming or community groups, and creates a unique experience to attract visitors.

A total of six Eagle Scout projects would be involved in creating the habitat. Each project will be led by a Scout and involves the individual project design, obtaining materials and equipment, scheduling delivery, providing labor for construction and installation, and coordinating with the other habitat projects. There are separate

projects for the gabion basket enclosures, filling the gabion baskets with riprap, an irrigation system, landscaping, a tortoise mound, and drinking pond. The plans were reviewed in detail with the Parks Board.

Board Questions:

Vice Chair Ferron felt it was a great project and noted the difference from the last presentation with much more detail. There were concerns on the safety of the tortoise. He asked if the video camera will deter any potential problems such as people going into the enclosure and taking the tortoise. The scouts noted that a surveillance camera would be set up to monitor the enclosure and provide evidence in the case of a theft.

Vice Chair Ferron asked about parking and how many people are expected to visit the habitat. The scouts hoped for a lot of visitors, but did not have an exact answer. This idea came from the tortoise enclosure at Santan Regional Park where there is a lot of interest and visitors. The Scout Leader estimated that at least two parking spaces would be needed for visitors to the habitat.

Matthew Roberts noted there were a lot of individual projects involved. If one is not completed, will the rest of the project be able to move forward? The scouts felt there would be some way to accomplish everything. They did not expect that any of the scouts would give up on their projects. The Scout Leader advised that this will be Phase 1, and more projects can be added in future phases, such as a Chuckwalla exhibit, pathways, and additional mounds or shelters.

Jennifer Jones asked how many animals the scouts were planning on and where will they come from? The scouts are planning on two tortoises and a chuckwalla in a separate exhibit in the future. The Game and Fish Department have animals available for adoption. Linda Ayres saw on Instagram that Game and Fish was overloaded with tortoises and are encouraging people to adopt.

Mark LaPorte asked if the Scouts planned on creating a program for the care of the tortoises. The scouts stated that idea has come up, but they have not explored that in depth. The cost of feeding for the tortoise at Utery was about \$8 per week. The landscaping will provide the types of vegetation that make up the tortoise's primary food source, such as prickly pear, brittlebush, and grasses. Minimal food supplementation would be needed.

Vice Chair Ferron asked who will be responsible if the tortoise becomes ill. Jennifer Lauria advised that will be more on the Town's side of the operation. The question is whether the Town would be willing to take on that responsibility if the project is approved. That can be discussed at the next level.

Robert Carmona stated the intent tonight was for the Board to review and discuss the overall concept and theme, and whether it was something the Board would like the Town to pursue. There was an estimated \$1,000 to \$2,000 for food and veterinary bills, although no funds are currently budgeted. If there is interest from the Board, staff will continue to work on the matter with the group and with Town management and come back with more finite details on those items in question.

Jennie Rambo, Riparian Preserve Naturalist, advised that rather than having a resident tortoise, there may be an option to have tortoises brought in for scheduled supervised programs by Game and Fish, Phoenix Herpetological Society, Liberty Wildlife or other organizations. That would fulfill the purpose of the Eagle Scout project and provide additional programming, but would eliminate some of the concerns regarding safety and security of the tortoise and greatly reduce maintenance.

MOTION: Mark LaPorte moved to consider adoption of the Eagle Scout Tortoise Habitat project and have staff bring back additional details; seconded by Matthew Roberts. Motion passed 7-0.

The Scouts were thanked for their detailed presentation.

8. FY19 IAP: Linda Ayres reported on the collaboration between departments and Board members to prioritize the annual Department goals in the Implementation Action Plan (IAP). Many of these were derived from the Master Plan that was approved in 2014. She reviewed the IAP Master Plan Action Items for fiscal year 2019:

Park Development - Construction of Phase 1 at Gilbert Regional Park and Desert Sky Park; design Phase 1B at Gilbert Regional; complete construction at Elliot District Park, opening in February, 2019.

Fund Development - Continue with Private-Public partnership opportunities for amenities.

Trails - Finalize signage, Trails Master Plan, identify gaps, prioritize trails, connections and crossings.

Optimization - Youth and Adult Sports programming.

Park Improvements – Create Riparian Preserve Maintenance Plan; inventory of Town trees and develop park tree maintenance plan.

LRIP (Long Range Infrastructure Planning) – Continue irrigation controller changeover and develop maintenance program; complete the LRIP for Parks Board and Council review.

Succession Planning – Training, mentoring, coaching for key positives, identify gaps in skill sets.

9. FY20 IAP PRIORITIZATION RESULTS: John Kennedy advised that we are now starting to plan for FY20 in the budget process. Budget requests will be submitted in the next few months for FY20 as the fiscal year runs from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020. He reviewed the results from the voting exercise at the last Board meeting to determine priorities for FY20, along with carry-over items from previous years.

- Consider naming rights and sponsorships for park facilities to offset costs
- Develop an Adopt-a-Trail program and promotional signage
- Continue the Long Range Infrastructure Planning (LRIP)
- Prioritize playground replacement as part of the LRIP
- Prioritize completing the remaining shade structures at Town playgrounds
- Determine level of cost recovery for program areas based on department requirements
- Work with HOA's to allow public access to private-owned facilities
- Continue year 3 of the 4-year irrigation controller change; develop preventative maintenance program
- Complete construction of Phase 1B at Gilbert Regional Park

Board Questions:

Mark LaPorte had provided a write-in item regarding the Santan Freeway Trail completion, which will establish a more centralized recreational corridor stretching from Chandler to Mesa. This would bolster socio-economic growth while providing sustainable access to existing facilities and amenities at SanTan Village, Crossroads Towne Center, and Gilbert Gateway Towne Center. He understood that the Town has already expended a lot of resources on future projects, although he would like to see this item on a future agenda.

Vice Chair Ferron asked when construction will begin for Phase 1 of Gilbert Regional and Desert Sky Parks. Robert Carmona stated both will go before Town Council in September for the guaranteed price and initial construction documents. He expects construction to start in early October after all of the permits have been approved. Both will be under construction at the same time. Haydon Building will be doing the Gilbert Regional Park and Hunter Contracting will be doing Desert Sky Park. There are different contractors but the same project management for both, Marc Taylor. Dig Studios has been working on the design for Gilbert Regional and Kimley-Horn has been designing Desert Sky.

Vice Chair Ferron asked when the first fields will be ready at Desert Sky Park, if construction begins in October. Mr. Carmona stated both parks are scheduled to open in September of 2019. Desert Sky may have a slightly earlier opening because of the amenities there versus Gilbert Regional.

John Kennedy asked the Board for a motion to support the FY20 Master Plan Action Items moving forward. This will help prepare for the Town administration's fall retreat coming up.

MOTION: Gilbert Honeycutt moved to approve the FY20 Master Plan Action Items as presented; seconded by Barbara Guy. Motion passed 7-0.

10. PARK NAMING: Robert Carmona appreciated the Board's assistance in helping to name the parks. On August 2, Town Council approved the names of Gilbert Regional Park and Desert Sky Park, formerly known as Rittenhouse Park. This year the Board will receive constant updates on the progress with both parks. It will be an exciting year for all as these items progress. Elliot District Park is yet to be officially named. That may coincide with the FY20 Master Plan which could include naming rights and sponsorships.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

11. MINUTES—Consider Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 10, 2018:

MOTION: Matthew Roberts moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of July 10, 2018; seconded by Mark LaPorte. The Motion passed 7-0.

12. MINUTES—Consider Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Meeting, Part II, of July 10, 2018:

MOTION: Matthew Roberts moved to approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting, Part II, of July 10, 2018; seconded by Mark LaPorte. The Motion passed 7-0.

COMMUNICATIONS

13. REPORT FROM CHAIR / VICE CHAIR: Vice Chair Ferron had no report.

14. REPORT FROM BOARD MEMBERS: Matthew Roberts works for the Secretary of State's office and encouraged everyone to vote, or return their early ballots now.

15. REPORT FROM FOUNDATION LIAISON: Linda Ayres, Foundation liaison, provided flyers for the annual Lakeside Luau fundraiser to be held on Saturday, October 20, 2018, 6-9 p.m. The Foundation has dedicated the first \$15,000 raised to the GAP scholarship program. She also had packets available on the various sponsorship opportunities for the event.

Robert Carmona attended the Foundation event last year and reported it was a fun evening and a great way to get to know people in Town. The GAP program is very important to assist families that cannot afford some of the programming. The swim lessons in particular help with drowning prevention, which is a serious issue across the Valley. We appreciate the Foundation's support.

16. REPORT FROM COUNCIL LIAISON: Councilmember Cook reported that earlier today the Town was successful in accepting a bid for one of the Zinke parcels. The winning bid went to Blandford Homes with a bid higher than market value. The second parcel will be up for sale very soon and we hope for similar results. That money will be going back into the park. The parcel that was sold is at the southwest corner of Germann and Greenfield. The parcel that will be up for sale next is further south at Chandler Heights and Greenfield. The property was rezoned to be more flexible and that resulted in a good win for the Town.

17. REPORT FROM STAFF LIAISONS: Rocky Brown reported that a couple of RFP's closed for Elliott District Park and staff is reviewing proposals for restaurants and a field house. He will have an update next month on those contracts.

Robert Carmona stated this Thursday, Council will consider approval of the FTEs that were presented at the last Board meeting. That item was moved from the August 2 meeting to allow for a review on a larger scale of the current parcels of park land and amenities and what is planned for the future.

John Kennedy reported that the Recreation Supervisor position was advertised a month ago. Staff has finished the first round of telephone interviews and have narrowed it down to six candidates. Final in-person interviews will

be held in the next few weeks. Summertime is wrapping up and the pools are being transitioned back to the schools for their programming. The recent storms have presented a challenge in keeping the pools clean. The first Movie in the Park of the season will be held on September 28 at the Community Center.

18. UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES: Denise Merdon reported there are no special events coming up in the next month. The Concerts in the Park will start in October. The group who does the Constitution Fair has chosen not to do it this year as they have had some reorganization. Staff is working with a few organizations for the Off the Street Festival in the Heritage District the first weekend in November. There will be musical entertainment, artists, and vendors. We are working on bringing in Arizona Food and Wine to do some sampling at the event. It will be a much bigger festival than in the past.

CONCLUSION

19. MOTION TO ADJOURN: Barbara Guy moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Gilbert Honeycutt. Motion passed 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 6:59 P.M.

ATTEST:

Les Presmyk, Chair

Denise Merdon, Staff Liaison

(TE: 14082507)